



Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority
Environment Committee Public Hearing
Monday, March 11, 2019

Sen. Cohen, Rep. Demicco, Sen. Kushner, Rep. Gresko, Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding and Members of the Environment Committee:

The Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority, (HRRA) is a regional, governmental, waste and recycling authority representing 11 Municipalities in Western Connecticut (*Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, Kent, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield and Sherman*).

The HRRA is submitting testimony on the following raised bills.

- HB 7294 - BOTTLE REDEMPTION IN THE STATE - **In support**
- RB 7296 - THE RECYCLING OF GLASS. – **Opposes**
- HB 5384 - THE ELIMINATION OF SINGLE USE STYROFOAM CONTAINERS – **In support**
- HB 5385 - THE ELIMINATION OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC STRAWS- **In support**
- RB 1003 - THE USE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS- **In support**
- SB 1001 - THE RECYCLING AND DISPOSAL OF SMOKE DETECTORS. - **In support**

HB 7294 - AN ACT CONCERNING BOTTLE REDEMPTION IN THE STATE. (support)

The HRRA supports HB 7294, however, the Authority would encourage the Committee to amend HB 7294 to incorporate the Governor's proposal to include wine and liquor bottles under "The Bottle Bill".

Increasing the deposit fee from five cents to ten cents will incentivize the public to take part in this clean, efficient and sustainable recycling system. Without an increase the public will continue to make the choice to either toss the material into the environment or trash, which has a direct environmental and financial impact to each municipality. It is not the lack of public awareness or education that prevents the public from participating in the bottle return system. It is the lack of personal value of the return fee to make the effort to participate, therefore increasing the deposit fee will increase the value and the desire to be refunded.

Increasing the handling fee will allow dealers and operators of redemption centers to invest and expand the operations of their business. They must be compensated a reasonable fee which will allow them to handle the increased volume of returned material. The system cannot be effective or successful without redemption centers and they cannot run without being financially whole. In addition, increasing the handling fee will allow more entrepreneurs to seek the opportunity to invest and open redemption centers throughout the state, creating jobs and enhancing the economics of the system as proven in the State of Maine.

The HRRRA is aware of the impact increase volume may have on the grocery redemption rooms and supports changes to the existing law that will divert the material to redemption centers and not grocery stores.

Allowing unclaimed escheats to be returned back into the system will support the cost structure. The unclaimed moneys should be reinvested into public education and perhaps returned to distributors to help off-set the burden of the handling fee.

It should be noted that some distributors are charging the handling fee to their customers in order to stay whole. The HRRRA has attached an example invoice from a local establishment that shows the handling fee charged back to the retailer. The distributors have the ability to embed their fees to their customers to cover their cost and stay whole, the retailers are able to pass that cost onto the consumers, keeping them whole, while the redemption centers have no leverage or ability to increase revenue without the approval of the State of Connecticut.

The HRRRA supports the expansion of additional glass beverage containers being included in the bottle redemption system. It is a fact that most of the glass beverage containers in the mixed recycling system are not being recycled. It is more cost effective for Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) to ship dirty MRF glass to landfills then to take it to a processor who will charge higher fees due to the contamination. It is a fact that the cleaner the glass the cheaper it is to dispose. Processors like Strategic Material here in Connecticut want clean glass from the bottle redemption system not MRF glass. Therefore, Connecticut MRFs are sending their MRF glass as far as 500 miles to be disposed of. It is false for the State of Connecticut to promote and mandate glass as being recycled in the single stream when in fact it is being sent to landfills for disposal as Alternate Daily Cover.

It is important to also point out the negative impact glass has on the equipment at the MRF. Glass acts as an abrasive and wears the equipment down, which ultimately increases processing cost. Those cost are passed onto municipalities in tip fees.

It is encouraging that Urban Miners will open a new facility in the State of Connecticut to process MRF glass into their concrete building product. However, they too need clean glass to make

their product. They will accept MRF glass, but they will need to process the material to remove single stream contamination in order to use the cullet as a feed stock. Their tip fees will be subject to the quality of the material. Please consider how many times a curbside single stream glass bottle is handled and processed before it can be made into any product.

Including wine and liquor bottles in the redemption system will create a clean source separated stream of material that will go from consumer, to redemption, to a glass processor. It is more economical, efficient, sustainable and environmental for glass to be handled through the redemption system then the mixed recycling stream.

Municipalities need relief from the growing recycling market crisis. Glass containers make up 20% of the weight in the mixed recycling stream. Including more glass beverage containers will shift the responsibility and burden of managing the material from the municipalities to the consumer, manufacturers and distributors. This material could easily be managed effectively through the bottle return system as long as the redemption centers are being compensated fairly with an increased handling fee.

27 MAIN STREET SOUTH
BRIDGEWATER CT 06752
860-354-2863

CUSTOMER'S ORIGINAL INVOICE CONFIDENTIAL PROPERTY OF

DELV. DATE	CUSTOMER	INVOICE NUMBER	PAGE
3/09/18	113126	154563975	7 2
TRUCK STOP			
/011			
ROUTE	PURCHASE ORDER		
5106	TERMS -PAST DUE BALANCES ARE SUBJECT TO SERVICE CHARGE		
DUE FRIDAY 4 WEEKS AFTER ORDER			
MANIFEST# 568696 NORMAL DELIVERY			
MA: S252 ERIC ATKINSON			

BRIDGEWATER CT 06752

QTY	PACK	SIZE	ITEM DESCRIPTION	ITEM CODE	UNIT PRICE	UNIT TAX AMOUNT	EXTENDED PRICE	INVOICE ADJUSTMENTS
1S	ONLY1 LB		IMPFRSH CILANTRO CLEAN WASH FRESH HERB	2219095	7.95		7.95	
1	CS 15 LB		IMPFRSH GARLIC WHL PLD	6651020	21.30		21.30	
2	CS 13 LB		IMPFRSH LETTUCE FRESH ARCADN 10734730354788	1132050	13.74		27.48	
1	CS 123 CT		ANDYBOY LETTUCE ROMAINE HEART	0742726	38.98		38.98	
1	CS 210LB		SYS CLS POTATO H/BRN CKD SKLS 34730-48578-00	3009428	34.40		34.40	
2S	ONLY2.5 LB		IMPFRSH SPINACH CLIPPED FRESH	1675925	8.00		16.00	
			GROUP TOTAL****				173.15	
			DRY					
			*** FROZEN ***					
1	CS 1212 CT		MISSION TORTILLA FLOUR PRESS 13	10237	8158750	50.46	50.46	
			GROUP TOTAL****				50.46	
			*** CANNED & DRY ***					
1	CS 1249 OZ		SYS CLS BROTH CHICKEN 550EC-SYS	5568241	30.96		30.96	
1	CS 41 GAL		HELLMAN MAYONNAISE EXTRA HVY 4800126540	6004857	61.27		61.27	
1	CS 1212 OZ		FRENCHS MUSTARD YELLOW SQZ CLS 417567741	4736070	21.16		21.16	
1	CS 601 OZ		BON MAM PRESERVE BLUEBERRY MINI 23457-5	7497324	34.98		34.98	
OUT	CS 601 OZ		BON MAM PRESERVE BLUEBERRY MINI 23457-5	7497324	34.98			
			REMOTE-STOCK 1					
1	CS 601 OZ		BON MAM PRESERVE RASPBERRY MINI 23456-7	1201508	34.98		34.98	
1	CS 666 5OZ		PORTCLS TUNA WHITE ALBACORE CHUNK WT 8576274	8576274	115.71		115.71	
1	CS 61 GAL		POLAND WATER SPRING 75720005048	4484572	9.30		9.30	
			CT BOTTLE DEPOSIT	P/CS	.30		.30	
			CT BOTTLE HANDLING/RECYCLE FEE	P/CS	.12		.12	

CASES 13 SPLIT TOT. PCS 3 CUBE GROSS WT. OPEN: 6:00 AM CLOSE: 3:00 PM REMIT TO P.O. BOX 4003

DRIVER'S SIGN

IMPORTANT PACA PROVISION: THE PERISHABLE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES LISTED ON THIS INVOICE ARE SUBJECT TO THE STATUTORY TRUST AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 5 (C) OF THE PERISHABLE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES ACT 1930 (U.S.C. 492(C)). THE SELLER OF THIS COMMODITY RETAINS A TRUST CLAIM OVER THESE COMMODITIES. ALL INVENTORIES OF FOOD OR OTHER PRODUCTS DERIVED FROM THESE COMMODITIES, AND ANY RECEIVABLES OR PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF THESE COMMODITIES UNTIL FULL PAYMENT IS RECEIVED FURTHER, YOU AGREE WITH RESPECT TO ANY DISPUTE ARISING OUT OF YOUR RECEIPT OF THESE PRODUCTS/SERVICES. YOU ARE GIVING UP YOUR RIGHT TO SERVE IN ANY MANNER AS A MEMBER OF A CLASS OF CLAIMANTS, IN ANY LAWSUIT INVOLVING ANY SUCH DISPUTE.

PAYABLE ON OR BEFORE

TOTAL

CONT. ON PAGE 3

This invoice shows the distributor charging the retailer the handling fee.

RB 7296 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECYCLING OF GLASS. (opposes)

Sen. Cohen, Rep. Demicco, Sen. Kushner, Rep. Gresko, Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding and Members of the Environment Committee:

The HRRRA OPPOSES HB 7296 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECYCLING OF GLASS.

The HRRRA would encourage the Committee to amend H.B. 7294 AN ACT CONCERNING BOTTLE REDEMPTION IN THE STATE to include more glass beverage containers.

Less than a year ago (June 2018) Public Act No. 18-181 (Substitute HB 5360) was passed. Under Section 12 - *"the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection upon request of a municipality shall authorize a two-year pilot program for the collection of glass."* The HRRRA has spent more than a year studying and implementing a glass collection pilot program under PA 18-181 to address the negative financial and environmental impact glass has on the mixed recycling stream and municipalities. It is our belief that the Committee should allow time for these pilot programs to run, collect data and report back to the Commissioner of CT DEEP before implementing such a bill as RB 7296 to give CT DEEP directive to develop a plan for the implementation of best practices for the recycling of glass in the state.

The HRRRA also believes that the expansion of the Bottle Bill to include wine and liquor bottles will have a positive impact on the mixed recycling stream, the market for glass, the financial impact to the municipalities and an overall positive impact on the environment.

Images of MRF glass are included in this testimony on the following page.



This image is a pile of MRF glass in Connecticut. It is difficult to see the glass due to the large amount of contamination.



This close-up image of MRF glass shows the straws that contaminate the stream among other small items that don't belong.

HB 5384 - AN ACT REQUIRING THE ELIMINATION OF SINGLE USE STYROFOAM CONTAINERS (support)

Sen. Cohen, Rep. Demicco, Sen. Kushner, Rep. Gresko, Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding and Members of the Environment Committee:

The HRRRA SUPPORTS HB 5384 - AN ACT REQUIRING THE ELIMINATION OF STYROFOAM CONTAINERS.

Single use polystyrene (Styrofoam) containers are an unacceptable item in the mixed recycling stream and cannot be recycled through a MRF. Banning polystyrene containers will support the goals of the State of Connecticut's waste reduction initiative of 60% by 2024. Banning this material will eliminate it from being placed in the mixed recycling stream where it is now considered a contaminate. This item when mixed with the other recyclables must be disposed of as residual waste increasing the overall cost of processing the other material. These cost impact municipal solid waste and recycling budgets.

HB 5385 - AN ACT REQUIRING THE ELIMINATION OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC STRAWS (support)

Sen. Cohen, Rep. Demicco, Sen. Kushner, Rep. Gresko, Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding and Members of the Environment Committee:

The HRRRA SUPPORTS HB 5385 - AN ACT REQUIRING THE ELIMINATION OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC STRAWS.

Single use items such as plastic straws contribute to the overall increase in contamination in the mixed recycling stream and are a contributing factor to the growing plastic pollution in our waterways threatening wildlife.

Plastic straws are detrimental to the overall mixed recycling stream and are considered a contaminate at the Material Recovery Facilities (MRF). Residents who are hopeful recyclers, folks that want to recycle everything that is plastic, add straws to the mixed recycling bin. These straws never get recycled. Instead they increase the level of contamination, decrease the value of the other material, ultimately increasing cost that fall onto the municipalities.

Public education and outreach will not change the behavior of the public. Implementing a ban on plastic straws is the only solution to reduce the negative impact plastic straws have on the environment. A ban will encourage manufacturers to find alternative environmentally safe materials to produce straws and or encourage consumers to use reusable straws.

RB 1003 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS (support)

Sen. Cohen, Rep. Demicco, Sen. Kushner, Rep. Gresko, Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding and Members of the Environment Committee:

The HRRRA SUPPORTS HB 1003 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS.

The HRRRA would encourage the Committee to amend H.B. 1003 to include a fee on paper and a future ban on all single use bags, both paper and plastic, to encourage and promote the public's habit to reduce waste and use reusable bags.

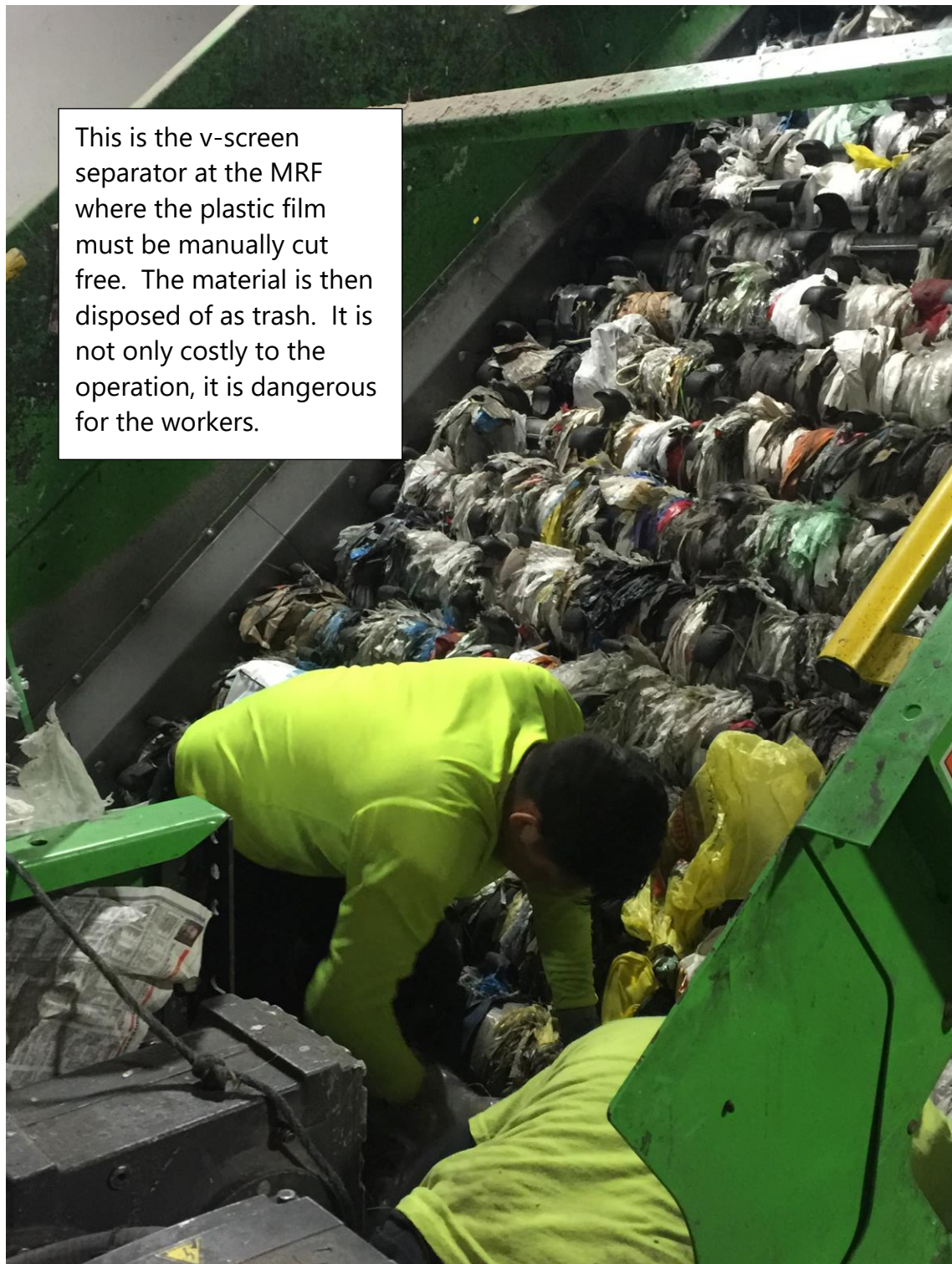
Single use items such as plastic and paper bags contribute to the overall increase in municipal solid waste. With the State of Connecticut at full solid waste capacity and a recycling market crisis, there is no better time to create and implement solutions to reduce the overall solid waste stream and encourage residents of the State of Connecticut to change their attitude and behavior towards material management.

Plastic bags are detrimental to the overall mixed recycling stream and are considered a contaminate at the Material Recovery Facilities (MRF). Plastic bags create serious equipment failure at the MRF costing the company money that is passed to haulers and municipalities through tip fees. When loads of mixed recycling are inspected on the tipping floor and have plastic bags and film mixed into it, the transfer stations and MRFs charge contamination fees increasing the cost of disposal. When plastic bags are mixed with recycling the MRFs are forced to shut down the entire operation every 3-4 hours in order to have men manually cut the material out where it has wrapped itself around equipment, costing them time and money. These costs are passed on via disposal fees.

Public education and outreach does not change the behavior of the majority of the public. Implementing a ban on plastic and a fee on paper bags will encourage and curb the behavior of the public to use reusable bags.

The members of the HRRRA support a state-wide comprehensive solution for single use bags rather than town by town local ordinances across the state.

HRRRA supports RB 1003 with an amendment to include a fee on paper bags.



This is the v-screen separator at the MRF where the plastic film must be manually cut free. The material is then disposed of as trash. It is not only costly to the operation, it is dangerous for the workers.

**S.B. 1001 AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECYCLING AND DISPOSAL OF SMOKE DETECTORS.
(support)**

Sen. Cohen, Rep. Demicco, Sen. Kushner, Rep. Gresko, Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding and
Members of the Environment Committee:

**The HRRA SUPPORTS SB 1001 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECYCLING AND DISPOSAL OF
SMOKE DETECTORS.**

“How do I recycle or dispose of my smoke detector” may be on the top 5 of the phones calls the
Authority receives from the public. The public is often confused and disappointed to hear that
the normal and acceptable practice for disposal is to place the item in their household trash.

The most common type of smoke detector is an ionization detector which contains a small
amount of Americium 241, a synthetic isotope which emits both alpha and gamma rays.

These items are not accepted at most household hazardous waste collections.

The HRRA supports an EPR program that would require manufacturers to establish a collection
system for the recovery of smoke detectors similar to the current Thermostat Stewardship Law
PA 12-54.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority (Bethel,
Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, Kent, Newtown, New Fairfield, New Milford, Redding,
Ridgefield and Sherman)

Jennifer A. Heaton-Jones
Executive Director, HRRA